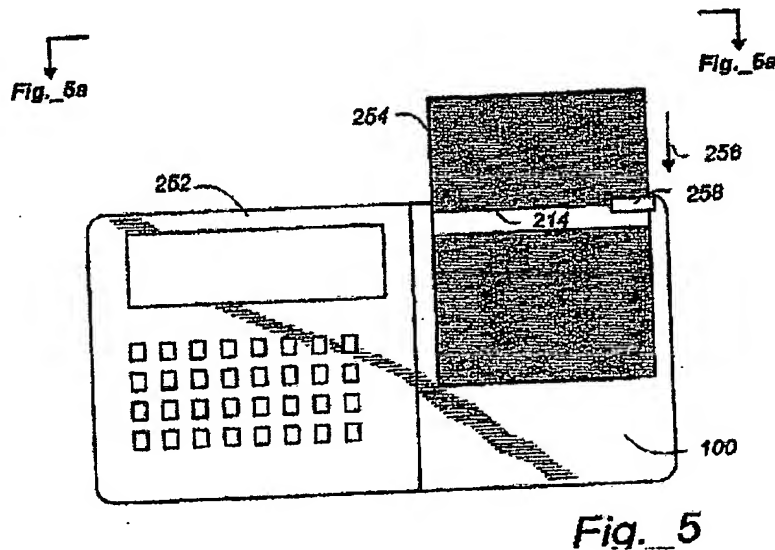


Remarks

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted along with a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) application. The Patent and Trademark Office mailed a final Office Action on February 21, 2006 in which the Examiner maintained the rejections under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by the published application of Nuckermans et al. (US 2002/0011558). An interview was held on May 24, 2006 between Examiner Negussie Worku and attorney for Assignee Kenneth J. Cool, and a summary of the interview was mailed on May 31, 2006. This Preliminary Amendment is being submitted to address the issues set forth in the final Office Action dated February 21, 2006 and in view of the interview held May 24, 2006. Claims 1, 15, and 17 are amended herein. Claim 15 was amended for clarity and to increase its scope. No new matter has been added. Assignee responds to the final Office Action dated February 21, 2006 as follows.

CLAIM REJECTIONS—35 USC § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by the published application of Neukermans et al. (US 2002/0011558 A1). For convenience, FIG. 5 of Neukermans is reproduced, below.



As can be seen from FIG. 5 of Neukermans, Neukermans fails to teach, disclose, or otherwise suggest that:

the scanning channel at least partially overlaps said operation panel

as recited in claim 1 as amended herein. Furthermore, Neukermans fails to teach, disclose, or otherwise suggest that:

the scanning channel is disposed beneath the operation panel and at least partially overlaps the operation panel

as recited in claim 17 as amend herein. This is further confirmed by a comparison of the above mentioned recitations of claim 1 and claim 17 as amended herein with FIG. 5a of Neukermans reproduced below.

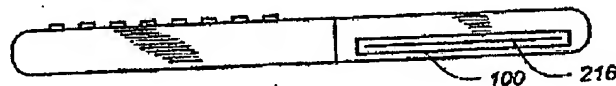


Fig. 5a

Thus, Neukermans does not teach, disclose, or otherwise suggest the elements of claim 1 or claim 17 as amended herein. Therefore, it is believed that the rejection should be withdrawn.

It is noted that claimed subject matter may be patentably distinguished from the cited patent for additional reasons; however, the foregoing is believed to be sufficient. Likewise, it is noted that the Assignee's failure to comment directly upon any of the positions asserted by the Examiner in the office action does not indicate agreement or acquiescence with those asserted positions.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of the claims is hereby earnestly requested. Reconsideration of the present patent application and early allowance of all the claims is respectfully requested. Please charge any underpayments or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-3703.

Invitation for a Telephone Interview

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney, Kenneth J. Cool, at (720) 227-9445 if there remains any issue with allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
ATTORNEY FOR ASSIGNEE

Date: August 21, 2006

/Kenneth J. Cool – Reg. No. 40,570/

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